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MESSAGE FROM MR. BOUTROS BOUTROS-GHALI,
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS,
TO THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

I welcome the convening of the Global Investment Forum under the auspices of UNCTAD.

This important event provides a focal point within the United Nations system for a thorough exploration of policies and arrangements for foreign direct investment, and in particular their impact on development in a globalizing world economy.

The deliberations in this Forum are also likely to concentrate on the links among investment, trade and technology. In the wake of the Uruguay Round, these interrelationships have assumed greater prominence and are becoming an increasingly significant component of the international policy agenda.

I am certain that this Forum will contribute positively to the ongoing dialogue on these vital questions.

You are gathering in fulfilment of the objectives set out by UNCTAD IX in Midrand, South Africa. In my address to UNCTAD IX, I emphasized the role of UNCTAD as a place of consensus and as an irreplaceable forum of the international community. The G-7 leaders, for their part, at their recent summit in Lyon, praised UNCTAD's renewal and described UNCTAD as "an important point of reference for the reform of the United Nations economic and social sector".

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I am particularly happy to note the new role that non-governmental actors are playing in UNCTAD activities. Joining the distinguished Ministers and high-level Government officials assembled today are chief executives of transnational corporations, the Secretary-General of the International Chamber of Commerce and the Secretary-General of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. The presence of these and other non-governmental actors provides a valuable bridge between official policy-makers and global civil society. I encourage you all to take advantage of this excellent opportunity to engage in informal exchanges on issues of common concern.

UNCTAD's work with regard to transnational corporations and foreign direct investment is receiving added impetus from its cooperation with the World Trade Organization. This forum offers a further opportunity for UNCTAD to contribute to the preparatory process for the forthcoming Ministerial Conference of the WTO, to be held in Singapore in December 1996.

Promoting growth, investment and sustainable development remains our main priority, our primary challenge, the focus of all our partnership efforts. In the expectation that the results achieved at this high-level meeting will build on, and add to, UNCTAD's long record of international achievement, I offer you my best wishes for a successful meeting.